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ABSTRACT

This book examines educators' norms, beliefs, and values in case studies of three "improving" high schools. The distinction between "sacred" and "profane" norms in the teaching profession is applied to the relationships among school culture, improvement efforts, and the effectiveness of change strategies. Schools' cultures, which vary in uniformity and alterability and which derive from a complex of national and local influences, react differently to the challenge of behavioral and cultural change. An introductory chapter explores factors involved in teacher response to improvement and effectiveness initiatives. Chapters 2 through 4 detail conditions and responses in the following three schools, respectively: (1) Monroe High School, located in a small city with a declining industrial base; (2) Westtown High School, serving a white-collar suburban community; and (3) Somerville High School, situated in a working-class neighborhood within a major city. Chapter 5 presents and expands on propositions relating school culture and change. Chapter 6 returns to definitions of effectiveness and urges change that respects the complexity and diversity of American high schools. A final chapter describes the study's procedures in the following categories: (1) research methods; (2) research approach; (3) site selection; (4) data collection plan; and (5) data analysis. A list of 98 references is appended. (AF)

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